

Rockville Zoning Revision

OUTLINE PRESENTATION

Neighborhood Contacts – July 18, 2006

Public Forum – July 27, 2006

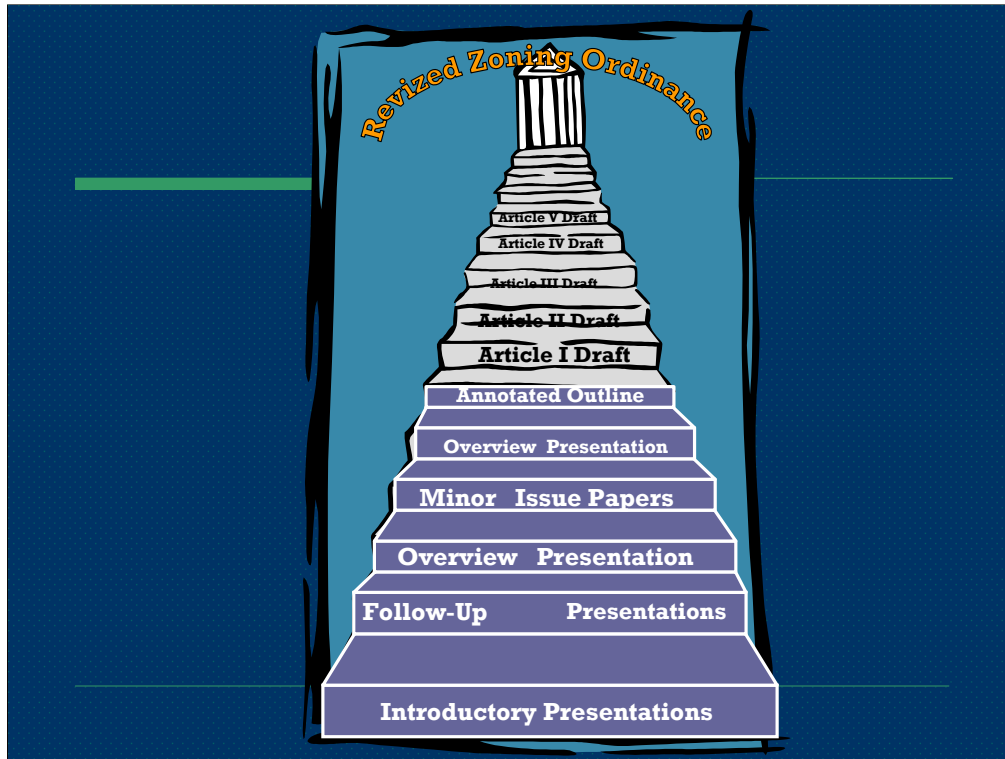
Zoning Affects the Character of a City

- Includes residential areas
 - Where can build
 - Where building located on a lot
 - In neighborhood or on busy street
 - What can build
 - How tall / wide the building is
 - Density
 - Sufficient parking?
 - Sufficient landscaping?
 - Signage?
-

Just a reminder to everyone before we start talking about the outline about the importance of zoning.

Zoning not only affects commercial and office districts of a City, but residential uses as well. Zoning controls *where* citizens can build things and *what* can be built in a private yard. For instance, zoning limits where fences can be placed, how big garages can be built, what a house's roof looks like, and whether residents can have a pool.

Zoning also creates the character of a city by regulating the types of buildings and the kinds of uses allowable in high-access areas of the City, like Town Center and Rockville Pike. The sense of place created in these areas is developed through zoning regulations which determine how high the buildings can be, what types of landscaping and other street features are present between the buildings, whether there is window shopping or sidewalk cafes available at the street level and whether offices or condos are available in the upper stories. In addition, zoning assures that there is adequate parking so visitors can use these businesses.



Throughout last fall and winter, staff completed a number of white papers discussing a number of topics of consideration for the zoning revision.

With the appointment of the RORZOR Committee – Representatives of Rockville Zoning Ordinance Review Committee – in February we began the next phase of the revision – the outline.

The committee met almost every week between March and early May and together with staff, have created a working outline of the newly revised ordinance.

As you can see, we're making a lot of progress on the revision. We're getting into more and more details of the ordinance but we're still fairly broad discussions at this time.

We're going to begin the draft stage next and that will entail the particulars of 10 or 15 feet setbacks, 30 or 35 feet high buildings, etc.

Purpose of Outline

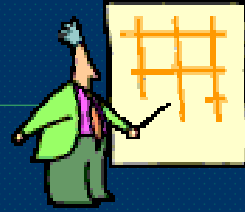


- Two primary purposes:
 - Proposed organization of the ordinance
 - Explanation of each section
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The annotated outline of the revised Zoning Ordinance accomplishes two goals. First, the document presents the proposed organization of the revised ordinance. Secondly, the outline provides an explanation of each section of the final document, both the purpose of each article and the general goals of the regulations. The outline presents this information in plain language (as opposed to the legalese that always slips into regulations) and can be used as a reference source when the ordinance is completed.

The RORZOR committee was created for the purpose of developing a draft ordinance to provide to the public. The outline they created represents the ordinance to be created by RORZOR this fall.

18 Articles



- Contents
 - List of sections
 - Explanation of what will be new
 - General Commentary – plain language explanation
 - Specific Sections – detail of each section
-

The ordinance will be divided into 18 articles

Each article provides three things –

- contents
- general commentary
- specific sections

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This is an exert from the table of contents to show how its organized. The TOC is fairly extensive (10 pages) to provide all relative information in one place.

Highlights of Outline / RORZOR

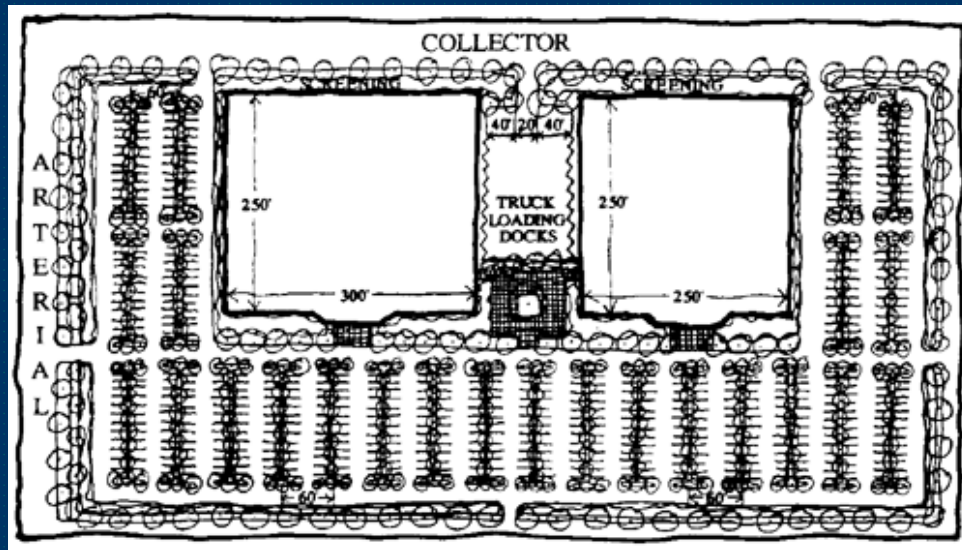
- Make the Code User Friendly
 - Logical organization
 - Find what need where expect to find it
 - More modern / plain language
- Technical Details
 - Clarify procedural requirements
 - Standard review
 - Number of parking spaces
 - Open space dedication
 - Use charts



The following few slides provides some of the highlights of the changes the outline represents and what it will mean for the future public hearing draft of the ordinance.

The document should be reorganized to provide each type of regulation in a logical location so that readers can easily search and find the information they need to know. **This will make the requirements of the zoning ordinance more understandable to everyone who may use the ordinance.** To the extent possible, clear, concise, plain English should be applied wherever possible. Archaic definitions and terminology should be revised or deleted.

The second goal is to address some of the technical details of the ordinance **in order to bring the zoning standards up to date with the current needs / desires of development in the City.** These are the procedural elements of the ordinance – things like application requirements. These are also some technical standards such as parking / open space / and the list of permitted uses. Let me give you a visual to help explain



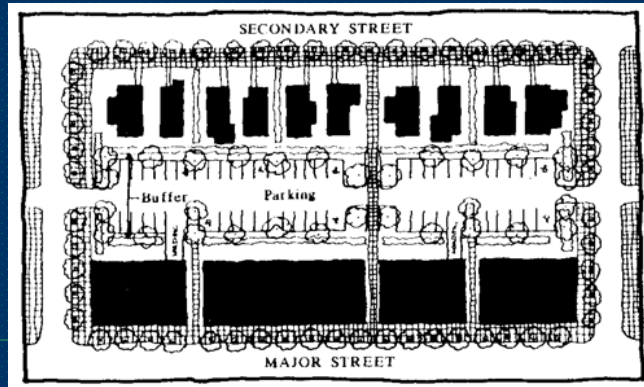
In other words, for the technical requirement review, for a site like this, we'll be looking at:

1. Is that enough / too much parking around the building?
2. Do we want those loading docks in the middle of the buildings or in another place?
3. Do we want that many trees? More trees? In those locations?
4. Should the building be facing a collector or arterial road?
5. And if an applicant wanted to build this, what is the process they must go through, are all the permits required reasonable and accomplish the goals they are meant to achieve?

Modernize Zoning Concepts

□ High Standards

- No special development procedures
- Requirements in each zone



The outline also reflects the transition between older-model zoning regulations to new concepts and techniques suitable to development in a mature community. Some of the recommendations that will provide this change are:

1. There will be high standards in the ordinance **to achieve high-quality development throughout the City**. If we want this kind of development in the community then we will ask for 1) that much landscaping, 2) parking to be behind buildings, 3) multi-use buildings to be oriented toward the streets. These are only examples of the types of requirements – there is likely to be more requirements and will be different in different in different areas of the City to ensure development meets the needs of each area.

Modernize Zoning Concepts

- Limit number of “single-use” districts
 - *Maintain single-family districts mostly the same*
 - Retain few solely commercial areas
- Increase the number of mixed-use districts
 - Discussion still – horizontal, vertical, permissive
 - Different types of uses / standards for different areas of the City

2. The consensus from the RORZOR Committee was to limit the number of “single-use” districts and to increase the number of mixed-use districts. **The purpose of this is to not disturb the existing single-family zoning districts to a great extent, while providing more uses within other areas of the City. The proximity of a variety of uses will allow for increased pedestrian activity and decrease the reliance on the single-occupant vehicle.**



The picture on the left shows a single building with a mix of uses in it.

The picture on the right shows a mixed use area with different types of uses in different places.



There's also the possibility of the flexibility of a mix of uses within a single area or a single building. In the south, for instance, many previously industrial mills are being converted to offices / commercial uses or residential uses. Permissive mixed use would allow any of those uses as the market changes.

Modernize Zoning Concepts

- No plan for optional method / amenity development option



3. There is no plan for the current optional method in the zoning ordinance or the amenity development option that was discussed in the white papers. Instead, a development like this that is usually provided by negotiation of an optional method will now be required in certain zones of the City. **This will substitute more definitive requirements for the current more subjective requirements in order to achieve the type of development desired in the City for every new development.**

Modernize Zoning Concepts

- Three tiers of industrial districts
 - Higher intensity industrial for possible annexation
 - Maintain medium intensity industrial districts with live/work opportunities
 - Incorporate lower intensity industrial into mixed-use districts
-

These three areas will allow for different areas of different intensity of industrial uses. The first will provide for possible annexation of industrial land on East Gude Drive; the second will allow for employees to live on-site or near some of the industrial employers in other areas of the City; and the third will allow a greater mix of uses (i.e residential, retail, service, office) with low-intensity industrial uses.



Picture of industrial live /work

Modernize Zoning Concepts

□ Incorporate Open Space Zone(s)

- Based on different needs
- Could include:
 - Civic Center
 - Golf Courses
 - Civic uses where redevelopment likely
- TBD: What is open space?



The incorporation of open space zones was recommended **to protect and preserve the existing open spaces of the City and to ensure that parkland needs of future and existing development can be achieved through redevelopment.**

Next Steps

□ Draft Ordinance

- Staff compose over summer
 - Staff review begin over summer
 - RORZOR draft ordinance discussion begin in fall
 - Public discussion - beginning 2007
 - Planning Commission – spring / summer 2007
 - Mayor and Council adoption - early fall 2007
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Questions?

